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A LORD'S SPEECH Without Doors,

To the Lords upon the present CONDITION of
the GOVERNMENT.

My Lords,

PRAY give me leave to cast in my *Mite* at this time, upon this great debate; and though it be with an entire dissent to some leading Lords, to whom I bear great reverence, it is according to my Conscience, and that is the *Rule* of every honest mans actions. My Lords, I cannot forbear thinking that a greater reproach can hardly come upon any People, than is like to fall upon us *Protestants*, for this unpresidential usage of our poor King: We feared the security of our Religion because of Him, and are now like to violate a great part of it by forfeiting our Loyalty towards Him; Religion is the pretence, but some fear, a *New Master* is the thing: This I take to have been the business of to day; for notwithstanding we see how feeble a thing Popery is in England, that it is beaten without blows, and routed so effectually, that it can never hope, nor we justly fear, it should return upon us, and consequently our Religion pretty secure, yet I don't see that this satisfies us, unless the King goes also: He must be turned away, and the Crown change its Head; for if the Crown be not the *Quarrel*, more then Property, and his Majesty's Person, then his Religion; Why did not the Prince stop, when he heard a Free Parliament was calling by the Kings Writs, (where all matters, especially that of the Prince of Wales might have been considered) or at least, where his Majesties Commissioners of Peace met him? who advised him to advance and give his Majesty that apprehension of his own insecurity; and if any thing but a Crown would have served him, Why was a Noble Peer of this House clapt up at Windsor, when his Majesty sent him on purpose to invite the Prince to St James? a Message that affected all good mens Hearts more then any thing, but his Majesty's return, it looks so Natural and Peaceable. But it seems, as if it had been therefore affronted, for the invitation could not have been received without the Kings remaining King; and who was there that did not lately say, it should be so? and who is there now that does not see it is not so? we can, my Lords, no longer doubt of this, if we will remember that the same night the Prince should have answered his Majesties kind Message, The Kings Guards were changed, and at midnight, the Princes Guards were clapt upon his Majesties person, and which is yet more extravagant to accomplish the business, Three noble Lords, in view, were sent to let him know, It was not for his safety, or the Princes honour; that he should stay in his own Palace. A strange way, my Lords, of treating ones own King in his own House; I cannot comprehend how it was for the Prince's honour the King should go against his will, or how it was against his honour that his Majesty should be safe in his own House: I leave it with your Lord-

ships to think who could render the Kings stay unsafe at White-hall, after the Dutch Guards were posted there. My Lords, this I confess is the great Iniquity that sticks with me, and deserves our severest scrutiny and reflection; that after driving our King away we should offer to address our selves to any body to take the Government, as if he had formally dissented it: It becomes us rather to ask; where the King is? how he came to go? and who sent him away? I take the honour of the Feeage of England to be deeply engaged, both at home and abroad, to search out this matter, and especially those, who are now present, most of whom owe their share in that noble Order to his Majesty, his Brother, Father or Grandfather. It is not unreasonable to believe the King had not gone at first, but upon some Message sent, and Letters received, to take care of his Person, for that nothing less then the Crown was intended; but being not out of his own Territories, and therefore no dissention, abdication or demise, as the Criticks of the conjuncture we are under pretend, (for the King may be where he will in his own Kingdom) we see while it was in his choice to go, he returned, and by as good as our advise too; so that we cannot in truth say his Dissention is the cause; for it is plainly the effect of our late extraordinary proceedings. If any should say, He needed not have gone now, it is a great mistake, for a King ought to go, if he cannot stay a King in his own Kingdom, which Force refused to let him be: And to stay a Subject to another Authority, had been a meaner forfeiture of his Right, then can in justice be charged upon his retirement: Wherefore his going must and will lie at their doors that set him on hour to be gone out of his own Palace. Many are angry (and yet pleased) that he is gone for France; but where, my Lords, should he go? Flanders dared not receive him; Holland, you could not think he should go to; and Ireland you would have liked less; and when we consider how far a League with France has been made the cause of his Misfortune (though to this day it is in the Clouds) what other Prince had the same obligation to receive and succor him: Therefore whatever arts are used to blacken his retreat, we cannot, with any shew of reason imagine that he could think himself safe with us, that had Exercised Sovereign power without him our Sovereign Lord, and under the protection of a Foreign Prince and his Army; though at the same time, we had Sworn Allegiance to him, and that it was unlawful for us to take up Arms against him under any pretence whatever.

My Lords, if this be not virtually and in effect to pull the Crown off his Head, and dethrone him unheard, I am to learn my Alphabet again. This is short warning to give Kings; for us at least, my Lords; that
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boast of Loyalty and were brought to these Seats by the favour of the Crown. What can other Nations think of the Nobility of this, if we come not to a juster temper? God defend us and our Children after us from the ill consequences of what has been done, and prevent the rest. Had we embraced the happy providence of his Majesties return, we might have improved it, that the Children unborn should have blessed us: Then we had reformed safely, for by joining Title to our actions, we had made them legal: This we should have had from his Majesty, or a plain denial, which would in some measure have excused so rare and unusual an enterprise: Nor can I comprehend which way it is possible to Guard the Princes honour, but by doing his Majesty Rights; for your Lordships may please to remember, that in the Memorial of the States, that was Printed amongst us, which they gave to all the publick Ministers at the Hague, to justify their lending the Prince their Forces upon this expedition, they do expressly say, *It was upon condition not to dethrone the King, or alter the Succession*, and in my opinion, we are in the high way to both.

My Lords, we are Protestant Christians, as well as Peers of the Realm, and are now upon our Religion and Conscience, as well as Honour, to do right: Let us so act as we can answer it to God and Man, and not stumble at Straws and leap over Blocks: Errors cannot be corrected by committing greater; nor one part of the Government be mended, by beating out another to do it. I need not tell your Lordships, that by our Laws, Kings cannot err, and therefore they are not accountable, but their Ministers are, without whom a King cannot perform any act of Government, which is the reason of the maxim; and therefore let them be punished that the Law only makes guilty. This our wise Ancestors contrived to save the Head of the Government whole, and to prevent the confusion and dishonour that might otherwise be apt to attend the Form of it, nor is it, indeed a thing that ought to be induced by us Peers, to suppose that he that raised us so high, could be for any reason thrown by us so low.

My Lords, let us limit the King if you please, but not renounce Him; there is a difference between restraining and destroying Him. What need of such extraordinary remedies, since that which secures the Government under one King will do it under another. Popery it self can never come in but over the Bridg of Despotick or Absolute power, and if we can secure our selves from that, we are as safe against Opinion as against Ambition; and till we are so by an amendment, of our constitution, we are exposed to the meer good nature of the Prince in Possession who ever he be: And to render what I have said to your Lordships not unreasonable, and what I have to move your Lordships to, in the close of my Speech, not ungrateful; I beseech your Lordships that we may call up our account, and see how our loss and gain stands, so far as we have gone in our late change.

We have lost a lawful King, and got an unlawful Protector, as our Law stands; we have missed a legal and a free Parliament, and have got a Convention that cannot make Laws, nor call a Parliament that can, but what will need a confirmation from a better Authority.

We have lost the reputation of keeping our faith with Hereticks, by breaking our solemn oaths with our King, in the time of his extremity, because we thought him such, though he gave us leave to lay down our Com-

misions, that we might not have the temptation or occasion to betray Him; But we have got the reputation of good Protestants by it, though I fear, not of good Men, in that some of us have not only not shown ourselves religiously concerned for our Religion, but in some respect, not honestly; that besides a Thousand personal immoralities, could press advance money from the King over night, to bear the charges of dissenting Him next day, against our warm and repeated Vows, to take his face, and dye at his Feet? and that any of us should be Sainted for this treachery, and numbred among the Heroes for our running away, cannot surely be the Lords doing, let Dr Burnet say what he will, and yet it is very marvellous in some mens eyes for all that. These are the Sparks, my Lords, that hunt the poor Kings Blood, though we know they had hardly had any in their veins but for his bounty, and yet are the favorites of the reformation. For Christs sake, my Lords, let us not at this rate christen Villany, and rank Dishonesty among the Graces. Popery it self could not have done more, and it is certain, we are even with the Papists now to all intents and purposes.

This is not all our loss, we have rebelled against the fifth Commandment also, Honour thy Father; and though we have got that of leaving Father for the sake of Religion, we could have but little Religion to do it in such a manner, to so affectionate a Father; nor did it lessen the error, to have a Church of England Apostle to be Captain of her Life-Guard, in his Blew Coat, and Jack Boots, and an arrant temporal Sword in his Hand, to defend natural Affection and passive Obedience. This was an odd sort of compliance with our Saviours command, to put up his Sword, as one of St Peters Successors. My Lords, I must not stop here; we thought we had been rid of Popish Souldiers, but find we have got as many, Papists in our Dutch, as we had in our English Army: Now it is plain, that either all Papists are not a like, and then the danger we have apprehended from Papists, is not universal, as we have affirmed, but that they are to be lived with, since we are to be saved and guarded from the danger of Popery by them, or we have ill luck to think we can be safe from that Religion by those that are of it, because they are Dutch Men. My Lords, I am sorry we can take such pleasure to see Strangers tread our Courts, pray God it does not show the way to other Countries to take their turns. But that a Dutch Papist should be so harmless a thing with us, that thought no Papist could be so, shows our contradictions to a madness: I know not how well our Souldiers like to give way to Dutch-Men, that thought they had purchased a preference to Strangers at a dear rate; but it is the justest thing in the World upon them, that the Prince should distrust those to Guard him, that had betrayed their own Master that loved them to a fault; they may serve to be sent for Holland, to be knockt on the head in the Dutch-Mans quarrel, but never to be trusted at home, though they have given up their Quarters with their King to Forraigners, so that the proverb is true upon them, they have hereby brought their Noble to Nine-pence; yet to be just, I must confess it is a reproach due to their Officers, and not all of them neither, and time may give those the opportunity to retrieve the credit they have lost by others Mens faults.

We were also very apprehensive of the ill consequences of the dispensing Power, especially in the case of Sr Edward Hales, but it seems the common Council of London are forbid to take the usual Oathes, and yet requi-

red to act, which is an unqualified capacity. We were in hopes we had lost a rude Army, but we have found a ruder; Twenty places cry out of them, and Kingston certainly with great justice, that in two nights time was two hundred Pounds the worse for them; and for *Closeting* we have got *Questioning*, that they that wont enter into *Associations* to protect the *Prince of Orange*, without one of our *King*, is to have no employment, so that if the *Prince* should take the *Crown*, I am bound to defend him against my own *King*, and my sworn *Allegiance*, though he come in right of his *Crown*. Believe me, my Lords, it is the boldest bid that ever Men made; I see Forty One was a fool to Eighty Eight; and that we Church of *England* Protestants shall cancel all the merits of our Fathers, overthrow the ground and consequence of their most *exemplary Loyalty* to *King Charles* the first and second, render their death, the death of fools, trample their *Memories and Blood* under our Feet, subject our selves to the just *reproach* of the *Phanatics*, whose Principles and Practices we have out-done, even to that *King*, that we forced upon them, and by our example had brought them to live well withal. God help us, this my Lords makes me say, that either we must turn from being Church of *England* men, or steer an other course, for it is but too plain that *Presbiterianism* is leading us out of our antient way, and whether we believe it or no, our Church sinks, and will more, for that is the interest that suits best with a *Dutch humour and conjunction*; and be sure, if we are so base to leave our *King*, God will be so just as to leave us; and here, my Lords, I shall leave you, with this *humble motion*, that we make an *humble Address* to his Majesty to return home to us, that we may act securely, and not go out of the good old way, which may intail misery upon us and our posterity. I should think we have had enough of *sending our Princes abroad*, in that much of the inconvenience we have lay under, since their Re-

storation, has been chiefly owing to it: We have driven him where we would not have him go, and do what we can to provoke that League we have been afraid of; and made a great part of the reason of this strange alteration in the Kingdom. Some tell us, *it is too late*, but I cannot comprehend the good sense of such an objection; Is it at any time too late for a *King* and his People to agree? after bloody Battels it has not been thought so, in all times and Nations; and why it may not be without them, I never heard a good reason yet: If his going was unreasonable, it has hurt him more then us, since we may thence hope for the better terms; if it was not a fault to go, it will be a great one in us, if we can have him home upon good terms, and will not; for if I may, with leave, speak it, his return is as much our convenience as his Advantage.

The offensive part of Him is gone, that is to say, the power of *Papery*, and what remains is our great interest to keep & improve to our own benefit and safety; I mean, my Lords, *His undoubted Title and Kingship*. And whatever some hot men say, that are more governed by private avarice and revenge, then the publick good of these Kingdoms, I cannot but renew my motion to your Lordships, that we may send a *Duke*, an *Earl*, a *Viscount* and a *Baron*, and two *spiritual Lords* to invite his Majesty home, upon the constitution of the Government. And my Lords, forgive me if I say, that if we can but get our *Juries*, *Sheriffs*, *Judges*, *High-Courts of Chancery* and *Parliaments* settled as they ought to be; the *Army* at least reduced, the *Malitia* better regulated, and a due *Liberty of Conscience* established to all Protestant Dissenters, and so far to Papists only, as the *Law against Conventicles* does admit, we may yet be happy; and upon these terms, my Lords, and no other, will his Highness the *Prince of Orange* become truly meritorious with the *English Nation*.